



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Thursday, 2 August 2012

NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.30 pm): The future of North Stradbroke Island is as bright as the sun that warms its sandy beaches and walking trails all year round. The residents of Straddie are, in general, cheerful and positive about their future now that the failed Bligh government has been removed. The risk to their future has been removed and now the task of rebuilding confidence and getting Straddie back on track has started.

The residents of Straddie gave the Newman government a very large mandate to change directions on Straddie with regard to cost-of-living issues and reinstating previously understood and agreed upon time lines for sandmining, among other issues. The Newman government's intervention on this matter will prevent the economic crash that the former government's policies would have brought on. A local recession has now been averted and local residents, workers and businesses are grateful.

Getting tourism back on track by working closely with the local tourism and hospitality sector and with local businesses has become important. I thank the tourism minister for a recent visit to Cleveland to discuss tourism on North Stradbroke Island and in other parts of the Redlands. Tourism suffered under the former government. Tourism is one of the pillars of the Straddie economy that must be nurtured and a practical approach adopted. Ecotourism is a part of that approach, but the former government's plans were overreliant on tourism, with the former Premier thinking that 400 jobs could somehow be created out of thin air. That is the equivalent of five Tangalooma resorts, which nobody thought was possible. The September school holidays are an important time for tourism and small businesses on the island and for jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector. The school holidays are fast approaching. I encourage people to visit North Stradbroke Island this holiday period.

Another Labor legacy is a problem with squatters in the bush. I raised this issue with the previous government on a number of occasions from a safety and disaster management perspective but without any interest or action to deal with the problem. As a result, the problem has compounded and, again, time and resources are being used to try to address the legacy of the previous government.

The Newman government is also working hard to address some recent incidents of bad behaviour of a few individuals, events that have caused angst and concern in the community. I want to acknowledge Brian and Hetty Conlon, who experienced a violent break-in recently. They are respected members of the community. There will be a fundraising event for them on 11 August 2012 from 11 am at the Dunwich Sharks Football Club. I want to assure the people of North Stradbroke Island and mainland Redlands that violence will not be tolerated and that we are working hard to make sure that Straddie remains the safe place that it has always been. I want to thank the police minister for arranging meetings and also the QPS personnel for their involvement.

The legacy of the previous government in terms of education is also a failed one. The former government left behind a junior high school program that is dysfunctional. I want to thank the education minister, his staff and the departmental personnel for their help in getting education back on track on North Stradbroke Island.